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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Meeting of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
Thirteenth meeting
New York, 5 August 2004
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Other matters

Note by the Secretariat**

1. At the thirteenth meeting of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 11 members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will be elected to replace those whose terms are due to expire on 31 December 2004 (see CEDAW/SP/2004/3 and addenda, as applicable). A report on reservations, declarations, objections and notifications of withdrawal of reservations relating to the Convention covering the period from 1 July 2002 to 1 June 2004 will be available at the meeting. That report updates information contained in an earlier report on the same subject (CEDAW/SP/2002/2).

2. The present information note is intended to bring to the attention of the States parties measures taken by the Committee to facilitate reporting under the Convention and use of the Optional Protocol.

3. The Committee adopted revised guidelines on reporting under article 18 of the Convention at its twenty-seventh session (3-21 June 2002). These guidelines apply to all reports submitted after 31 December 2002 and should be followed by States parties in the preparation of initial and all subsequent periodic reports. In addition to providing general guidance on the content of reports, the revised guidelines also make recommendations concerning the format. In particular, they suggest that reports should be as concise as possible: initial reports should be no more than 100 pages and periodic reports should be no more than 70 pages in length. The Committee's reporting guidelines were issued in the annex to document A/57/38 (Part II) and can also be accessed on the web site of the Division for the Advancement of Women (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw).

* CEDAW/SP/2004/1.

** The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.

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4. Since the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, the Committee's mandate has expanded to include responsibility for implementation of the procedures provided for in the Optional Protocol. At its twenty-sixth session (14 January-1 February 2002), the Committee adopted a model communication form in order to facilitate the use of the communications procedure by individual women, or groups of women, claiming violations of rights protected under the Convention. The Committee and its Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol have requested the secretariat to make efforts to disseminate the Convention and the Optional Protocol, as well as the model communication form. The model communication form is attached to facilitate its further dissemination by States parties. The form was issued in chapter V of document A/57/38 (Part I) and is also available on the web site of the Division (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw).

5. The Committee agreed, at its thirtieth session (12-30 January 2004), to include in its annual reports an overview of its current working methods so as to make these more transparent and readily accessible to States parties and others interested in the implementation of the Convention, including United Nations agencies, programmes and funds and civil society organizations.[1] At an informal meeting held from 5 to 7 May 2004 in Utrecht, the Netherlands, the Committee reached agreement on further enhancing its working methods. The Committee is expected to adopt these agreements at its thirty-first session (6-23 July 2004). The revised overview of its working methods will be included in document A/59/38 (Part I).

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[1] The overview of the Committee's current working methods is contained in document CEDAW/C/2004/I/4/Add.1.